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(5-9 June 2006)*

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I. Organization of the session

A. Opening of the session

1. The President said that recently, UNICEF had engaged in important joint initiatives, both in the field and at headquarters, not least because of the personal commitment of the Executive Director. These partnerships helped to forge and temper the unique identity of UNICEF, and to enhance greater coherence of the activities of the United Nations system. At a time of the "system-wide search for magic answers on how to improve operational activities for development ... we may well help the Fund's work for the world's children by rightfully and forcefully asserting the value of the unique strengths of UNICEF", he said. In its deliberations, the Board could highlight those strengths and make a convincing case for the continued existence of UNICEF as a distinct entity. Without pre-judging the outcome of the Board's deliberations, he believed that the Board could make a meaningful contribution to the work of UNICEF if it arrived at effective solutions promptly and in the traditional spirit of UNICEF camaraderie.

2. The Executive Director began with a tribute to Dr. Lee Jong-Wook, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), who had died suddenly the previous week. He was "a true champion for children's health ... [and] the children of the world were better for his time on earth", she said.

3. In her recent travels, she had seen firsthand the devastating effects of violence against children. In countries where violence was used as a weapon of war, gross violations of children's rights had flourished. These violations also affected the work of UNICEF in a wide array of areas, such as child survival, HIV/AIDS, nutrition and education, and also affected the organization's ability to deliver humanitarian relief. This work must remain central to the mission of UNICEF, and more must be done to position UNICEF to be able to prepare and respond effectively to emergencies. Despite the enormous needs, many emergency appeals remained underfunded. The UNICEF Emergency Programme Fund (EPF) had proven to be the most reliable means of mobilizing resources quickly, but was critically overstretched. The secretariat wanted to begin a discussion with the Board on measures to improve the UNICEF emergency response capacity.

4. During the first year of her tenure as Executive Director, she said she had worked to support a culture of continuous improvement at UNICEF. The organization needed to integrate programmes and functions wherever practical, to maximize results and avoid duplication. It must be able to provide bold leadership, work productively and effectively in partnerships and consistently enhance business practices and be willing to challenge to conventional wisdom. The organizational review processes that were underway offered an excellent opportunity to do so.

B. Adoption of the agenda

5. The Executive Board adopted the agenda, timetable and organization of work (E/ICEF/2006/10) for the session.

6. In accordance with rule 50.2 of the rules of procedure, the Secretary of the Executive Board announced that credentials had been submitted by 44 observer delegations, Palestine, 4 United Nations bodies, 1 intergovernmental organization, 2 specialized agencies, the Standing Group of National Committees for UNICEF, 4 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and one other entity.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Annual report of the Executive Director: progress and achievements against the medium-term strategic plan (2002-2005)

7. The Executive Director made some preliminary remarks about the report (E/ICEF/2006/11), followed by an introduction by Mr. Kul Gautam, the Deputy Executive Director.

8. Delegations welcomed the report's analytical and comprehensive nature and especially the link with the Millennium Development Goals. Several delegations said they are happy with the active participation of UNICEF in United Nations reform and that given the organization's decentralized structure and capacity to work at country level, the reforms and harmonization should not diminish its identity or comparative advantage to advocate and work for children.

9. Speakers expressed satisfaction with the reporting of results in each priority area and the emphasis on indicators and performance monitoring. However, some said that more work was needed on use of data and *DevInfo* at country level. Others remarked that while the reporting on results was satisfactory, there were no suggestions on the best way forward for the future.

10. Several delegations noted with concern the declining ratio of regular to other resources and called for further analyses and indication on how this situation could be changed. Some speakers called on donors to increase their contributions to regular resources.

11. UNICEF needs to further improve its work and reporting on the human rights based-approach to programming and on gender, said many delegations. While progress was noted in reducing the gender gap in education, further work was needed in all sectors.

12. Some delegations called for more focus on capacity-building and the need for improved UNICEF engagement to steer such processes as poverty reduction strategies and sector-wide approaches (SWAps) at national level. It was also said that UNICEF should continue to focus on its strengths in community-based approaches to development and its field orientation.

13. Good progress had been made in child survival and development, polio eradication and control of diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory infections and malaria, it was said. One delegation expressed concern that despite the good progress achieved towards polio eradication, routine immunization has not received sufficient attention. Another delegation called for increased attention to neonatal mortality reduction. Some delegations noted with satisfaction the joint work with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) around maternal mortality reduction and the World Food Programme (WFP) on ending hunger. Some delegations asked for details of UNICEF contribution and progress in cluster leadership in emergencies and that future reports devote attention to reporting on results in emergencies.

14. Many delegations noted with concern that the expenditure ratios had not increased for child protection and HIV/AIDS. Some expressed the hope that the recently launched *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign would substantially increase fund-raising in this area and demonstrate key results as noted in the new medium-term strategic plan (MTSP). A delegation said that the lack of a comprehensive approach in child protection hampered UNICEF work at country level. Another speaker called for continued attention at country level to developing and implementing comprehensive early childhood development (ECD) policies.

15. Several delegations welcomed the independent organizational review and requested that this and other reviews, including the review of external partnerships, be discussed at future sessions of the Board. Some speakers expressed concern that the new MTSP paid insufficient attention to human resources development and staff training but did express satisfaction that UNICEF had key results and plans for the new plan period.

16. Delegations called for greater focus, clarity and further strengthening of the results-based reporting in future annual reports of the Executive Director. They also stressed the need for continued emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa and the least developed countries.

17. The Deputy Executive Director welcomed the critical inputs and suggestions. In response to some of the specific observations, he said that while funding for HIV/AIDS and child protection had not increased in percentage terms, the actual amounts had in fact increased. Hopefully, the release of the United Nations Study on Violence against Children would result in increased attention from donors to this area. UNICEF continued to emphasize and was fully committed to both the human rights-based approach to programming and to gender, and would report on results and progress in future reports. He also said that decision of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) on the leadership and coordination

roles of UNICEF in the areas of nutrition, water and environmental sanitation and data communications were based on the organization's comparative advantages on the ground. UNICEF would continue to play a key role in education, child protection and health, areas that were consistent with the Core Commitments for Children in Emergencies (CCCs).

B. UNICEF post-crisis transition strategy in support of the MTSP

18. The report (E/ICEF/2006/17 and Corr.1) was introduced by the Director, Programme Division, who welcomed Mrs. Elizabeth Alpha-Lavalie, Vice-President of the Mano River Women's Peace Network, based in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and Mr. Kazuhide Kuroda, Senior Social Development Specialist for the World Bank's Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction Unit.

19. Mr. Kuroda described the Bank's integrated approach to conflict prevention and reconstruction in terms of mobilizing the Bank's assets, building on lessons learned and strengthening partnerships with all other stakeholders, including UNICEF. The Bank was increasingly incorporating a conflict analysis framework in the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) and country assistance strategy processes. Considerable achievements had made through collaboration of the World Bank and United Nations agencies in recent years, including joint needs assessments in post-conflict countries such as the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Haiti, Iraq, Liberia and Sudan.

20. Mrs. Alpha-Lavalie emphasized gender equality as an integral goal of development and the pivotal role of women in peace-building and rehabilitation. She highlighted the fact that gender equality, justice, equitable development and the meeting of basic needs of households (education, health, shelter and security) are the prerequisites of peace and of a democratic society.

21. Delegations welcomed the strategy. Many stated that commitments such as the Millennium Declaration and Development Goals, the Plan of Action adopted by the General Assembly Special Session on Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child should continue to guide UNICEF work in post-crisis transition. There was also agreement that the strategy should support the well-established regular programming approach of UNICEF as outlined in the MTSP.

22. Several speakers welcomed the linkages between the strategy and the five focus areas of the MTSP but pointed to the need to further define indicators for measuring progress. The Director responded that the document addressed the use of indicators in several paragraphs. UNICEF would use the MTSP results matrix as the reporting basis for each focus area and would explore additional indicators that might be required during the transition phase. Indicators would be included in future annual reports of the Executive Director.

23. Delegations praised the emphasis on the participation of children and young people and gender sensitivity in the strategy's guiding principles, as well as in consultations with crisis-affected communities. They also welcomed the "bottom-up" approach to programming.

24. The cluster approach piloted in the Pakistan earthquake response was welcomed as an important tool for increasing coordination during emergency response and early recovery. Several delegations asked how the lessons learned from Pakistan and the recommendations of the IASC real-time evaluation of the cluster approach would be incorporated into UNICEF work and how cluster responsibilities would adapt over time to the rapidly evolving context. The Director of Emergency Programmes responded that the valuable lessons learned by UNICEF would be applied in subsequent emergencies. He highlighted several lessons: (a) concerned Governments should lead efforts; (b) "one size does not fit all", as the approach needed to be adapted to country contexts; and (c) "quick wins", such as restarting school for children, are essential to building confidence, trust and hope.

25. He emphasized that early funding was vital. UNICEF was working with a number of partners, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, to devise quick-release mechanisms. In Southern Sudan, for example, UNICEF hosted a capacity-building trust fund of about $16 million, of which approximately $14 million had been disbursed in the first three to four months. In response to a question about how the strategy would be funded, he stated that there would be no separate funding; and support would come through existing mechanisms.

26. Delegations highlighted the importance of advocacy for women's and children's rights and the valuable asset of the UNICEF voice in advocacy. Several delegations emphasized the importance of capacity-building, especially regarding child rights, suggesting that this could have been further addressed in the strategy. It was also recommended that work be done with Governments to establish standards, such as those for child-friendly schools. In reply, the Director of Emergency Programmes cited the example of advocacy for children that took place following the Indian Ocean tsunami: by working with authorities in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Indonesia to strengthen child protection, UNICEF and partners had helped to prevent child trafficking rather than deal with its effects.

27. A number of delegations expressed support for the strategy's commitment to strengthening partnerships with programme countries, donors, other United Nations agencies and NGOs. One speaker said that global development strategies should be developed to respond to crisis situations, which are often complex. Another suggested that the integrated mission approach should be standard. One speaker asked why the International Recovery Platform, which was devising a post-disaster assessment tool for natural disasters, was not mentioned, and how UNICEF was participating in the Platform. The Director of Programme Division explained that UNICEF had been working other United Nations Development Group (UNDG) agencies to ensure a consolidated approach to transition and was also working with partners to implement the Hyogo framework on disaster prevention and response.

28. Asked if there would be a separate strategy for fragile States, which were not covered in the strategy, the Director of Emergency Programmes responded that UNICEF would continue to address conditions in fragile States, which often result from long-term disparities and other issues, through regular development programmes. UNICEF was working with partners, including other funds and programmes, to ensure that various transition strategies responded to the needs of fragile States.

29. See chapter III, decision 2006/6 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

C. Review of the UNICEF cost-recovery policy

30. The report (E/ICEF/2006/AB/L.4) was presented by the Executive Director. The report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/2006/AB/L.5) was also available.

31. Overall, delegations commended the quality and transparency of the secretariat's analysis. There was general acceptance of the direction of greater simplification and harmonization that would make UNICEF a more effective partner in development activities, including in joint United Nations programmes. Delegations nevertheless stressed that the recovery rates applied had to be transparent and that fiscal soundness had to be maintained. It was also stated that small countries would not be able to benefit from the flexibility afforded to large contributions.

32. Significant importance was given to the need for UNICEF to continue to emphasize raising regular resources through specific strategies, and to ensure that modified recovery rates did not provide a greater incentive for mobilizing other resources at the expense of regular resources. Speakers stressed that UNICEF should continue to measure its real costs in order to continue to move to fully covering these in the actual amounts recovered. They also asked the secretariat to continue to work with the UNDG Executive Committee agencies on the harmonization of cost recovery.

33. See chapter III, decision 2006/7 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

D. Report on options to improve the harmonized country programme approval process

34. The Deputy Director, Division of Policy and Planning, presented the report on options for improving harmonized country programme approval process jointly prepared by UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA (E/ICEF/2006/12).

35. Delegations were generally appreciative of the joint agency effort to respond to Executive Board decision 2005/9, which called for further proposals to improve and streamline the current country programme process and approval

procedure. Speakers reaffirmed the importance of improving the harmonization of the country programme process for achieving development results in the shortest time frame and with national leadership at the centre of the process. Some delegations expressed strong endorsement of the proposal for the adoption of a common framework that would enhance synergy and country team performance among United Nations agencies as well as a stronger, coherent alignment with national processes. However, many were apprehensive about changes proposed to simplify the process and documentation in isolation of discussions within the context of the larger United Nations reform debate.

36. Other delegations questioned the timing of the decision to consolidate the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), with several suggesting that the current proposal went beyond paragraphs 49 and 50 of General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, and should therefore be discussed in a broader forum. A call for greater discussion and analysis was echoed by other speakers who stated that a decision on the matter would be difficult before the report of the High-Level Panel on System-wide Coherence had been presented and discussed by the Assembly.

37. Several speakers called for additional analysis of the achievements and shortcomings of the current UNDAF process, suggesting that a comprehensive evaluation and lessons learned be documented by UNDG. Some expressed the importance of piloting a consolidated UNDAF process before considering universal application, allowing countries to decide. A number of delegations expressed concern that administrative costs and complexities in running two processes simultaneously would be counter-productive. One delegation requested an explanation regarding the legal status of a consolidated UNDAF process, positing that, if so, then the whole document should be formally approved as opposed to only the section C. Another speaker queried how funds and programmes intended to monitor the legal obligations entered into by States under international instruments. A speaker requested more information regarding the consolidated UNDAF consultative process that would take place at the national level and which partners would be involved.

38. Many speakers reiterated support for the principle of national priorities and strategies at the core of the work of the United Nations funds and programmes and asked that this principle govern any further proposals for improving the country programme approval process.

39. The Deputy Director replied that the best available experience at headquarters and field levels was consulted in order to identify and build on the strengths of the present UNDAF and country programme approval system. Internal and external evaluations and reviews of the UNDAF process were also examined. Similarly, good practices and lessons learned would continue to be documented and disseminated within the framework of the UNDG Programme Group. Formal and informal discussions with Bretton Woods Institutions, bilateral agencies and NGOs operating in countries routinely took place with Governments during the strategy discussions of which the country programme document (CPD) was an outcome. The proposed process was designed to reinforce the United Nations' contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals as prioritized by national partners. UNICEF, through the country programme, supported Governments in the implementation of recommendations emerging from human rights treaty bodies' deliberations, particularly for the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. He also clarified that the legal status of the current UNDAF had been established by the Economic and Social Council.

40. Closing the discussion, the President of the UNICEF Executive Board thanked delegations for remaining engaged in this and asked the facilitator of the informal discussions, Mr. Thomas Gass (Switzerland) to report back to the Board later in the week.

Outcome of informal discussions

41. At the closing meeting, the President read the following oral statement concerning the outcome of the informal discussions on agenda item 6:

"My understanding is that the Board members, during the informals, have agreed that some progress was made in negotiating a draft decision on this item and that more time was needed in order to reach a consensus on this important issue.

The Board requests UNICEF, jointly with UNDP and UNFPA, to make further proposals to improve and streamline the current harmonized country programme approval procedure, as stipulated in Board decision 2005/9. Mr. Thomas Gass [Switzerland] has made himself available to facilitate further informal consultations on this subject during the time leading up to the second regular session of the Board."

42. The President suspended the meeting briefly to allow delegations time to consult on the content of the statement. When the meeting resumed, delegations from a number of programme countries reiterated their support for the work of UNICEF in the field in support of developing countries' efforts to protect the rights of children and promote their well-being. They stated that the principle of national priorities and strategies in the work of the United Nations funds and programmes must govern any proposals made relating to country programmes. They said that unfortunately, this was not the case of document E/ICEF/2006/12, which contained proposals to harmonize the procedures for approving country programmes.

43. The Vice-President representing the Western European and others Group said that it was unfortunate that no decision has been reached on item 6 despite the many informal consultations organized by the secretariats of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF. He thanked the respective secretariats for their time and effort on this complicated issue and wished them wisdom in the further preparation of information for this Board. He also thanked Mr. Thomas Gass for his time, effort and patience, and expressed the hope that leading up to the September Board, there would be a fruitful discussion.

44. After a brief discussion as to whether the President's statement would be considered an oral decision by the Executive Board, the President said that it was his understanding that the legal power of the oral statement of the President equalled that of an oral decision, and he was going to seek the Board's approval of his oral statement. The Board agreed to support the President's statement.

E. Report on the implementation of joint programming

45. Following a short video on UNICEF activities in the context of United Nations reform in Cambodia, Deputy Executive Director Kul Gautam introduced the report on the implementation of joint programming. The report, prepared jointly with the secretariats of UNDP and UNFPA, was accompanied by an addendum describing the experience of UNICEF (E/ICEF/2006/13 and Add.1).

46. Several delegations thanked UNICEF for the report, including its objectivity and frankness in discussing challenges. Many agreed with the report on the benefits of joint programmes, which include the reduction in duplication of efforts, a greater understanding of other United Nations agencies' mandates, increased coherence for programme delivery, a broader range of partners and increased leveraging of additional resources. There was general consensus that joint programming should be judged foremost on its impact in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and results for children.

47. Many delegations recommended that a thorough evaluation of joint programmes and joint programming be undertaken once more experience was gained in the field, including a study of the impact on transaction costs and comparing the effectiveness of joint programmes with that of single-agency programmes. The Deputy Executive Director said that it would most likely occur at the end of 2007 or beginning of 2008.

48. One speaker encouraged the maintenance and improvement of standards of reporting and accountability so that donors could be certain their funds were being used by the organization that they intended to support.

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49. In advocating a strengthening of the use of joint programmes as a programming tool, several speakers suggested that this would require streamlining the Common Country Assessment (CCA)/UNDAF process, harmonizing financial management systems, eliminating double cost recovery (in the pooled funding option), implementing a standard and ongoing joint monitoring system, and ensuring that the comparative advantages and individual mandates of each agency were not lost. It was suggested that joint programming be based on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Other delegations recommended that joint programming be determined by national priorities over donor priorities; that it not become a prerequisite for donor funding; and that it be introduced more gradually in phases based on pilots and other assessments of previous experiences.

50. To a question about whether a CCA/UNDAF was always a pre-requisite for joint programmes, the Deputy Executive Director responded that it was not, citing the example of Argentina. He also emphasized that the visibility, individual mandates and comparative advantages of each agency were not being lost in joint programming and that despite a lack of hard evidence, anecdotal evidence suggested a reduction in transaction costs. He assured delegates that joint programming took account of the unique realities and priorities of each country and that it would be applied in a measured, considered manner.

F. Report on UNICEF engagement in sector-wide approaches

51. Following the introduction of the report (E/ICEF/2006/14) by Kul Gautam, Deputy Executive Director, delegations agreed that SWAps had become an integral part of poverty reduction strategies and were accepted by both donor and recipient countries as they strengthens national ownership. They acknowledged that SWAps help to facilitate simplification of processes, promoted harmonization among different "players" and addressed disparate goals. Others said that they increased efficiency while reducing duplication.

52. Many delegations said that SWAps should be coherent with national policies, processes and be nationally led. It was also said that United Nations reform should strengthen UNICEF so as to better support countries, and UNICEF in turn should strengthen its own capacities in order to be responsive to the needs of recipient countries, especially for capacity-building. Other speakers agreed with the report that SWAps should be more outcome-oriented. Currently there was a focus on heavy processes and UNICEF should to give more attention to the content and quality of SWAps. The objectives of SWAps should be aligned with the Millennium Development Goals.

53. Some speakers said that the report did not address the issue of national ownership sufficiently in line with the Paris Declaration and wanted to know what UNICEF would do regarding prog. mme (budget) funding. They urged that more attention be paid to the content, quality and results of SWAps, as well as monitoring of Millennium Development Goal indicators. It was suggested that young people participate in SWAp processes. Delegations expressed high expectation that the UNDG guidelines would be completed in 2006 and define the balance between the human-rights and technical professional approaches. They supported the notion of cross-country evaluation of SWAps.

54. The utility of SWAps could be limited in emergency and fragile States, it was said. UNICEF was applauded for developing its comparative advantage to engage in SWAps, but it should recognize that this process could be labour intensive. Although 20 countries had integrated vitamin A into SWAps, none had been able to do with undernutrition. Wider use of the Marginal Budgeting for Bottlenecks tool was urged as it could give insights into the functioning of health systems.

55. A delegation commended UNICEF for playing an important role in strengthening technical capacities in health information systems and information-sharing. The speaker referred to the health SWAp in Mozambique, which built the database for better planning and implementation of health strategies. A delegation welcomed the definition of roles in the report, especially the brokering role played by UNICEF. The speaker encouraged UNICEF to strengthen the participation of NGOs and other civil society voices in SWAps.

56. The Deputy Executive Director said that UNICEF was training 300 staff per year to engage more productively in SWAps and other development instruments. UNICEF was also facilitating young peoples' participation and acting as a

broker to increase the participation of civil society. One example was the education SWAP in Cambodia, where 50 NGOs were involved. UNICEF was working within UNDG to amend its rules and regulations to make them more "SWAp compliant". He agreed that in some fragile countries in crisis with governance problem, the project-oriented approach might be more appropriate. The Chief of the Health Section cited growing collaboration with the World Bank that was aimed at ensuring that resources were allocated where most needed, using the examples of the medium-term expenditure frameworks in Ethiopia, Mauritania and Rwanda. Responding to a question, he said that other resources-funded programmes and SWAps could be complementary, as for example when other resources funding provided by the Canadian Government permitted testing of the Accelerated Child Survival and Development Strategy in West Africa, which was now incorporated into SWAps in those countries.

57. See chapter III, decision 2006/8 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

G. Ending Child Hunger and Undernutrition Initiative: oral report

58. The Director, Programme Division said that although the global community has promised to reduce the proportion of children under five years of age who are underweight by half between 1990 and 2015, at the global level the world community was still not on track to reach that target. A Global Plan of Action would support national and international efforts in four key ways: (a) at the global level, to ensure the sustainable supply of affordable health and nutrition services and commodities and the delivery of increased financial resources; (b) at the macro level, to integrate child health and nutrition needs into national policies plans and budgets; (c) at the meso level, to strengthen district and community health and nutrition systems and to support the achievement of other Millennium Development Goals including to reduce under five-mortality, improve maternal health, promote gender equality ensure access to education, water and sanitation and services to stop HIV/AIDS; and (d) at the micro level, to empower families to improve their health, feeding and childcare practices.

59. On behalf of a group of European countries, a speaker said that the Initiative should be aligned with the MTSP and be consistent with the UNICEF health and nutrition strategy. The Initiative appeared to be another vertical initiative rather than an integrated, more horizontal approach which would facilitate national leadership and ownership. He expressed concern that a new initiative could siphon funds away from other established activities and said that it should not involve a new funding channel. Clarifications were also sought on the role of the World Bank and what would be done differently from earlier and unsuccessful attempts to reduce hunger and undernutrition. The Director replied that the Initiative would not be vertical, and that its aims fit well within the result areas of the MTSP.

60. Another speaker, on behalf of African delegations, said that undernutrition and hunger were major obstacles to development in many African countries, linked to education, parasite control and water and sanitation. Special attention must be paid to addressing dietary insufficiencies, associated diseases, especially HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis; the clear links to poverty leading to hunger and malnutrition; insufficient medical care and systems. They encouraged the involvement of programme countries and stressed the importance of technical support. UNICEF should help to further develop national capacities, establish credible and reliable information and monitoring systems and prioritize gender issues.

61. Other delegations expressed support for the Initiative and reported on their own experiences with food programmes for children and families with limited resources and school feeding programmes. One speaker suggested that nutrition interventions be mainstreamed in health, education and water and sanitation programmes. The Director stated that the Executive Director and the WFP Executive Director had participated in a joint regional management plan meeting in Panama in May, which had underscored the vital role of national leadership, national ownership and national capacity-building. He agreed that the secretariat would present another oral report at the second regular session.

II. Report on the evaluation function in UNICEF

62. The Director of the Evaluation Office introduced the report (E/ICEF/2006/15) and also referred to the findings, conclusions and recommendations of an external peer review of the evaluation function, which had been discussed at an informal pre-session briefing.

63. Several delegations welcomed the report and praised the Evaluation Office for its efforts to improve the quality of the evaluation function at all levels and for its leadership role in the United Nations Evaluation Group. Several delegations requested further clarification on the role of the UNICEF evaluation function in United Nations reform, while others encouraged additional efforts to enhance harmonization, especially in terms of joint country-level evaluations. A number of speakers welcomed the support given by the central Evaluation Office to strengthening the results-based management system, including through the development of integrated monitoring and evaluation frameworks and performance indicators for the MTSP. Other speakers said there was a need to address the gap between system-wide indicators and the project- and programme-level planning systems. Delegations welcomed the emphasis placed on strengthening national capacities and ownership as well as the planned engagement of UNICEF in joint country-led evaluations.

64. Several delegations welcomed the evaluations of responses to humanitarian crises, including the increased emphasis on real-time evaluations. They acknowledged UNICEF work in the Tsunami Evaluation Coalition and recommended continued follow-up on the tsunami evaluations.

65. A number of delegations said the peer review presented an opportunity for UNICEF to improve its evaluation function and strengthen the organization's performance. It was recommended that UNICEF develop a comprehensive evaluation policy. Several speakers recommended formalizing the independence of the decentralized evaluation function (including the Director's reporting lines) and clarifying roles, responsibilities and accountabilities at all levels. Several delegations endorsed conducting fewer evaluations while increasing quality. It was also recommended that UNICEF strengthen the capacities of Regional Offices to provide technical support, oversight and quality assurance for country-level evaluations. UNICEF needed to allocate sufficient human and financial resources to these efforts, ensuring a more predictable budget and increased regular resources for evaluation. Several delegations endorsed the peer review panel's recommendation that all evaluations submitted to the Board be accompanied by a management response.

66. Responding to a request that costed evaluation work plans be presented to the Executive Board, the Director stated that the global evaluation plan had been presented in the MTSP, and biennial performance reports were prepared at the global level; at the regional and country levels, plans were decentralized. He acknowledged the request for greater consistency in the results matrices of CPDs and underlined the determination of UNICEF to improve the articulation of results, particularly the specific results to be achieved by UNICEF in collaborative efforts with other United Nations agencies.

67. He added that UNICEF would prioritize strengthening evaluation at the regional and country levels and would work with national evaluation offices and local partners to evaluate UNICEF activities, including those undertaken in partnership. UNICEF was also supporting national evaluation associations and promoting the evaluation profession at the country level. UNICEF and other United Nations agencies were developing country-led joint evaluations in domains such as development and humanitarian action and on themes such HIV/AIDS to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the United Nations contributions. Regarding the peer review, the management response would most likely be formulated in a policy statement submitted to the Board at the next annual meeting.

68. See chapter III, decision 2006/9 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

I. Proposals for UNICEF programme cooperation

(a) Draft country programme documents

69. The President said that at this session, the Executive Board would consider a total of 24 draft CPDs. Fourteen draft CPDs for full programme cycles were presented for discussion and comment, and for approval of the aggregate totals of estimated regular resources and other resources in the programme budget. Taking into account the comments of the Board, the draft documents would be revised as appropriate, and a summary results matrix added. The revised CPDs would be posted on the UNICEF internet site in October 2006 and submitted to the Board for approval on a no objection basis at the first regular session in 2007 unless at least five members had informed the secretariat in writing, within six weeks of the posting of a document, of their wish to bring a particular country programme before the Executive Board.

70. In addition, several short-duration CPDs for one-year programmes were presented to the Board for approval. These short-duration programmes were usually prepared so that the UNICEF programme cycle could be harmonized with the cycles of other agencies, or to allow time for finalization of the UNDAF. It was expected that the full country programmes would be presented to the Executive Board in 2007. At this session, the Board would consider for approval nine short-duration CPDs, as well as the CPD for Oman, which was funded entirely from other resources.

71. In an overview of the CPDs, the Director, Programme Division, said that the current proposals amounted to almost $1.3 billion, of which $268 million were from regular resources and slightly more than $1 billion in other resources. The CPDs were aligned with national priorities; had been developed through inclusive consultative processes; emphasized achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; clearly utilized the core competencies of UNICEF; emphasized national capacity development, particularly in monitoring, policy development, decentralization of social services and emergency preparedness; and included partnerships with national and international development actors. Many of the proposed country programmes also emphasized child survival and evidence-based policy advocacy, with a focus on leveraging resources for children.

Eastern and Southern Africa

72. The Regional Director introduced the draft country programme documents (CPDs) for Ethiopia and Mozambique (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.2 and Corr.1 and E/ICEF/2006/P/L.4) and the CPDs for the short-duration programmes of Malawi and Rwanda (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.3 and E/ICEF/2006/P/L.5). The UNICEF Representative for Ethiopia also spoke about that country's programme of cooperation.

73. The Minister of Health of **Ethiopia** highlighted key challenges for reaching the Millennium Development Goals, saying that if the trends showing a reduction in under-five and infant mortality rates were to continue, Ethiopia should be able to achieve the 2015 targets. To accelerate interventions in the focus areas, the key strategies were a community-based programme with an extended outreach dimension; capacity development of health workers; and reform of the health system to harmonize its different elements and partners. Other delegations noted the alignment of the programme with national priorities and the commitment to implementation of the Paris Declaration. UNICEF advocacy on nutrition and girls' education was also praised. Several speakers flagged the need to improve the coherence of the health and nutrition programmes to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness. It was suggested that the monitoring and evaluation function be strengthened, especially data collection and analysis. One speaker recommended that the observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child be taken into account in annual work plans; that community dialogue on female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) be strengthened; that the focus on child-friendly schools be increased; and that more reporting be done on children with disabilities.

74. The representative of **Mozambique** said that the partnership with UNICEF was crucial for protecting the rights of Mozambican children. The changing development context, including new and existing aid modalities, had emphasized greater national ownership and the alignment of programmes with national development priorities. The overarching goal of poverty reduction continued to present challenges even though cooperation with UNICEF had contributed to the overall decline of poverty, including reduced under-five mortality, increased immunization coverage and increased literacy and

girls' enrolment in school. Other delegations commended UNICEF for a good alignment of the CPD to national priorities (especially as expressed in the PRSP), and UNICEF involvement in the health SWAp. UNICEF and the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) as a whole were praised for significant progress made toward coordination and harmonization in accordance with the Paris Declaration. UNICEF was praised for its human-rights based approach to programming, which some delegates said should also include women's rights. The support to national decentralization and capacity-building was also appreciated. Several delegations also recommend that UNICEF shift its focus from service delivery to greater technical assistance (particularly in the education sector) and capacity-building (in the areas of ECD and water and sanitation).

75. The representative of **Malawi** commented on the linkages between the draft country programme and the Millennium Development Goals, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the national plans of action, including that for orphans and vulnerable children, and the Malawi growth and development strategy. There was a need for a greater programmatic connection between nutrition and HIV/AIDS as well as additional counselling and testing facilities at sites for the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV. The focus of the draft country programme on building capacities as well as the ownership of the communities was commended. Another speaker said that although the country programme was aligned with national programmes, there was scope to reduce the number of UNICEF projects in the country to focus resources. The Regional Director said that the CPD was for a one-year bridging programme and the next full programme would fully reflect national priorities.

76. The Regional Director reiterated the commitment of UNICEF to working with other United Nations agencies and partners in support of government priorities in all countries of the region. UNICEF was committed to helping to build national capacities, especially at the local level.

West and Central Africa

77. The Executive Board had before it draft CPDs for Gabon, Guinea and Sao Tome and Principe (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.8 – E/ICEF/2006/P/L.10), and short-duration programmes for Equatorial Guinea and Togo (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.7 and E/ICEF/2006/P/L.11), which were introduced by the Regional Director.

78. The representative of **Guinea** said that the draft CPD addressed the country's priorities and was aligned with the PRSP and UNDAF, which emphasized combating poverty, improving people's socioeconomic circumstances, good governance and building national capacities. The country was facing difficulties due to conflicts in the region and an influx of refugees, as well as the threat of avian influenza. The Government remained committed to lasting economic development through fulfilling its commitments to universal primary education, particularly for girls, access to clean water and sanitation, integrated rural development and combating AIDS.

79. One speaker asked if capacities existed for implementing the programme's participatory inclusive development. Referring to the fragile situation in the region, she asked to what extent risk analysis was part of the strategy for implementation. The Regional Director replied that UNICEF would support implementation of the country programme in cooperation with many partners including other United Nations agencies. She noted the existence of contingency plan for Guinea that would allow flexibility and adapt to changing situation.

East Asia and the Pacific

80. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPD for Thailand (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.12), which was introduced by the Regional Director, who commended the efforts being made through the UNDAF and the United Nations Partnership Framework for Thailand, finalized in March 2006.

81. The representative of **Thailand** thanked UNICEF for its support for the country's social and economic development, and for the relief and recovery efforts during the tsunami crisis. He said that Thailand had made notable progress in reducing child mortality, universal primary education, lowering the HIV infection rate and gender equality and was on track to meet most of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. However, the most vulnerable groups,

including ethnic minorities, migrants and displaced persons, faced difficulties in accessing social services and protection. UNICEF needed to continue its active role in promoting child protection, basic education for children, prevention and reduction of HIV transmission among young people and from mother to child.

82. A delegation emphasized the importance of UNICEF continued work, especially in child trafficking and other protection issues and in social mobilization to prevent an avian flu pandemic.

83. Another speaker commended UNICEF for its specific efforts to protect the most vulnerable children from violence, abuse and exploitation through birth registration and provincial child protection systems. The speaker welcomed the regional perspective that UNICEF brought to child protection by collaborating with neighbouring countries to address cross-border issues. Close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was also encouraged.

84. The Regional Director said that UNICEF would continue to work closely with UNHCR on child protection issues and cited significant progress in many areas, including the approval by Parliament of a resolution providing access to education for non-Thai and unregistered children. Regarding the tsunami crisis, UNICEF had learned several lessons that would benefit future work.

South Asia

85. The Executive Board had before it the CPDs for the short-duration programmes of Bhutan (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.13), Nepal (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.14) and Sri Lanka (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.15), which were introduced by the Regional Director.

86. The representative of **Nepal** said that his Government accorded high priority to the development of children, including ECD, nutrition, education and the reduction of infant under-five and maternal mortality. He concurred with the document's analysis of the situation of children in Nepal and stressed the need for additional resources in order to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the national five-year plan. The Regional Director replied that the United Nations country team was working very closely with the Government and other donors to analyze the best way to support development efforts in Nepal.

87. The representative of **Sri Lanka** thanked UNICEF for its contributions, especially in the aftermath of the tsunami, and its ongoing assistance in spotlighting issues affecting children, particularly in the northern and eastern provinces. The Regional Director reported that UNICEF was in close contact with the UNCT, the donor community and the Government in articulating the next country programme. Special attention was being paid to dealing with the delays in development caused by the tsunami and to supporting communities where indicators lagged behind national averages. Another delegation suggested that UNICEF consider further involvement in the education sector development framework, and also proposed more harmonized work in different sectors, which would strengthen national ownership and improve sustainability. The situation of children in conflict-affected areas in the northern and eastern parts of the country should be a priority. The delegation requested to be kept informed about UNICEF alternative strategies in case of renewed and escalated fighting. The Regional Director responded that UNICEF was constantly examining ways of collaborating with partners under different security scenarios, with the aim of creating a strong and sustainable national capacity. She expressed confidence that continued work in education would benefit from this broad-based approach and she noted the particular emphasis of UNICEF on improving the quality of education in less-developed geographic areas.

Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

88. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPD for the Republic of Moldova (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.16), which was introduced by the Regional Director.

89. The representative of the **Republic of Moldova** expressed appreciation for the professional knowledge, commitment and support of the UNICEF team in Chisinau. She supported the draft CPD, considering it a direct response to the national priorities as indicated in the Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (EGPRSP). With

UNICEF playing a central role in coordinating national and donor efforts to protect children's rights, significant results had been achieved, particularly in reducing infant, under-five and maternal mortality and in leveraging considerable resources for the Fast Track Initiative in education. She emphasized the Government's commitment to achieving the Millennium Development Goals, to placing child poverty at the centre of EGPRSP, to enhancing the quality of services for children and to reaching the most excluded and vulnerable children.

90. Another speaker welcomed the role of Parliament in overseeing children's rights. She also commended the enhanced harmonization between donors and national institutions during the development of the draft CPD. Further clarification, however, was sought in two areas: (a) the needs of, or actions for, the most vulnerable children, mentioned in paragraph 11 of the draft CPD; and (b) the situation of children living in institutions, including the total number of children and trends in de-institutionalization. The Regional Director commended the interest expressed in the reform of the child protection system and said that UNICEF supported capacity-building of Parliament. Regarding paragraph 11, she clarified that specific data on child poverty were needed to target interventions in the EGPRSP and European Union/Moldova action plan. As for children living in institutions, there were 11,400 such children, including those with disabilities, and about one child per day was abandoned, though sufficient data were still very difficult to obtain for the country and the region.

Middle East and North Africa

91. The Executive Board had before it the draft CPDs for Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and Yemen (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.17, E/ICEF/2006/P/L.18, E/ICEF/2006/P/L.19, E/ICEF/2006/P/L.21, E/ICEF/2006/P/L.24, E/ICEF/2006/P/L.25 and E/ICEF/2006/P/L.26), the short-duration CPDs for Lebanon and Sudan (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.20 and E/ICEF/2006/P/L.23) and the recommendation for other resources funding for Oman (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.22), which were presented by the Regional Director.

92. The representative of **Algeria** said that the proposed country programme was to a great extent aligned to the country's national development priorities for 2005-2009, but that UNICEF should extend programmes more to the economically disadvantaged and remote areas of the country. He also requested that the revised CPD use updated data that would be provided to the country office. The Regional Director replied that the country programme was gradually moving towards greater assistance to the more remote and disadvantaged areas and took note of the new data to be provided to the country office. He pointed out Algeria's outstanding contributions in the region in the area of child trauma.

93. The representative **Morocco** encouraged UNICEF to continue its ambitious programme covering areas related to women and children, such as health, quality of education, protection, the fight against violence, exploitation and vulnerability in rural areas and the establishment of a mechanism to promote a social policy directed at children. The Regional Director spoke of Morocco's contributions in the region to combating violence against children and sexual exploitation of children.

94. The representative of **Sudan** expressed appreciation for the long and close partnership with UNICEF. He said that the recently signed peace agreements with the South and in Darfur would allow the strengthening of this cooperation, especially in immunization campaigns and programmes for water and sanitation, protection and education. He also singled out the positive results in the reduction of maternal mortality rates and measles immunization coverage in the north and south. He expressed appreciation for the UNICEF contribution towards national development objectives and its humanitarian emergency assistance. The Regional Director acknowledged the positive developments in north and south Sudan, as well as the technical cooperation between the police forces of Sudan and Jordan in the area of police training on violence against women.

95. The representative of the **Syrian Arab Republic** said that his Government's approach to child protection was based on the belief that it required love, understanding and patience, and acknowledging UNICEF work in this area. The speaker indicated his Government's readiness to lift its reservations to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and had submitted a report on the Optional Protocols and on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. His capital would submit information and data to the country office with regard to paragraphs 6 and 8 of

the draft CPD that he hoped would be reflected in the revised CPD. The Regional Director welcomed the Government's readiness to lift its reservations to the Convention and took note of the new information to be provided.

96. The representative of **Lebanon** commended the work of UNICEF in the country, saying that the country's indicators were proof of the need for continued assistance by UNICEF.

97. The representative of **Iraq** said that because of the difficult situation in her country, it needed the support of United Nations agencies and the international community for its reconstruction, especially in the social sector. She requested several amendments to the draft, without prejudice to the substance of the proposed programme, including: (a) to indicate the authors and source of the various surveys referred to in paragraphs 1, 2 and 5; (b) expressing doubts about the veracity of the data in paragraph 5; (c) that the word "laws" be deleted from paragraph 7, as they considered the "generalization" in this paragraph "unreliable and abusive"; (d) the Constitution was adopted by a National Assembly following a national referendum and therefore, reference to the new Iraqi Constitution should also be deleted in paragraph 7; and (e) that the reference to the National Constitution and legislation in paragraph 21 be deleted, as the existing Iraqi legislation and constitution provided adequate protection and guarantees for Iraqi women and children.

98. The Regional Director took note of these comments and urged further consultations between the UNICEF country office and the Government. He said that the delegation had been provided with the statement of the Deputy Minister for Planning and Development Cooperation (MOPDC) which had cleared the CPD. UNICEF, as part of its mandate to provide technical assistance to Governments with regard to the Convention on the Rights of the Chile, routinely commented on national laws and draft constitutions that touched on the rights of the child. He emphasized that MOPDC and all other relevant ministries had been consulted at every stage of the long process of CPD development.

99. Responding to a question from another delegation about the implementation and absorptive capacity for the $30 million other resources budget, he said that over the past three years, the Iraq country office had been implementing at a rate of about $100 million per year and the existing capacity was well positioned to absorb the proposed budget levels. The modus operandi put in place by UNICEF in Iraq, including the use of a network of small Iraqi contractors, would enable UNICEF to carry out a wide range of activities in the country, despite having its international staff operating out of Jordan. The situation was expected to continue, subject to the security situation in Iraq. Responding to another question on the coverage of UNICEF interventions, he said that work in the physical sectors such as water supply and school rehabilitation had so far succeeded in a wide geographic area. However, work in the "softer" sectors was much more dependent on safe movement of personnel and so the coverage remained rather limited. There was a need for donors to support the recovery of the social sector, as the international focus was more on infrastructure rehabilitation.

100. On the **Yemen** CPD, a delegation asked about the relationship between the proposed programme and the national development and basic education development strategies, and said it was not clear how UNICEF would support decentralization projects related to government reforms and other development activities. The speaker welcomed recent progress in basic education indicators. The Regional Director replied the relationship between the country programme and national strategies was mentioned in the document. In the past four years, UNICEF had been implementing a major World Bank programme aimed at decentralization of health, education and social welfare services into target districts. The programme had been completed recently and UNICEF now had a number of new donations to support decentralization and strengthening of rural education. Decentralized education continued to be an important issue for Yemen. Despite some progress, major obstacles remained in some parts of the country. Child trafficking, migration of minors and low school enrolment for girls were other major issues.

101. The representative of **Egypt** thanked UNICEF for its assistance, particularly in the fight against HIV/AIDS. He reiterated his Government's priority for the battle against hepatitis C, which had an estimated prevalence rate of 69 per cent, while there were an estimated 5,300 cases of HIV/AIDS and only 68 reported cases. He cited the Government's national plan on HIV/AIDS, multisectoral national strategic plan, developed in partnership with UNICEF, and active monitoring of the ban against FGM/C. Other government efforts to improve the situation of children included tighter child labour laws, the literacy initiative "Reading to All" and the expansion of community health centres. He asked that these points be reflected in the revised CPD. The Regional Director saluted Egypt's efforts against HIV/AIDS and FGM/C and

looked forward to further consultations between the Government and UNICEF country office on the issues raised. He said that the draft CPD had been discussed extensively with concerned government ministries.

102. Another delegation asked about the reliability of data in the draft CPD, particularly regarding gender parity and women in general, and proposed that UNICEF support more data collection in the country. The speaker also said that UNICEF could cooperate more with civil society organizations in protection and development, especially concerning advocacy for women and children. The speaker also asked why there was no reference in the document to UNICEF cooperation with WHO, especially on behalf of Bedouin women. The Regional Director said that that lack of data was an issue throughout the region and not only relating to gender. This was especially true for disaggregated data at the subnational level and for rural-urban disparities, especially with regard to the Millennium Development Goals.

103. The country programmes were approved (see chapter III, decision 2006/10).

(b) Recommendation for additional regular resources for approved country programmes

104. The report (E/ICEF/2006/P/L.27) was introduced by the Director, Programme Division and approved by the Executive Board without comment. (See chapter III, decision 2006/11.)

Statement by Regional Director for Europe

105. The Regional Director said that in 2005, the National Committees for UNICEF had mobilized some 40 per cent of UNICEF income. Although private sector fund-raising remained their primary purpose, they also carried out education for development activities and advocacy for child rights. The year 2005 had been marked by exceptional disasters and by the exceptional generosity of millions of private individuals in response to the Indian Ocean tsunami and South Asian earthquake. Innovation in fund-raising was vital to ensure continued support from private donors, individuals and corporations who want to be partners, and not just donors, in programmes to benefit children. Recent innovative examples came from the United Kingdom and Polish Committees. Soccer Aid, which organized a benefit match – England versus the "rest of the world" – that raised over 2 million pounds and drew attention to malaria and AIDS; and the first-ever media field trip by the Polish Committee, to Sierra Leone, which generated high visibility on the deaths caused by measles, in partnership with a Polish television station and mobile phone company. In addition, the Spanish Committee, in collaboration with UNICEF and the Spanish Government, would support the Third Intergovernmental Conference in Making Europe and Central Asia Fit for Children, to be held 19-20 June in Palencia, Spain.

106. The Committees had also continued their advocacy work around the Convention on the Rights of the Child, he said. In the past year, UNICEF and the National Committees had participated in the presentation of seven State party reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and some Committees had helped to prepare alternative NGO reports. The Committee's concluding observations called for States to make appropriate allocations to ensure full and equitable access to social services, especially for disadvantaged children. Another recommendation for all industrialized countries reviewed in the last 12 months was to strengthen data collection and improve monitoring mechanisms, especially for victims of sexual exploitation, children who are out of school, children in alternative care, non-citizens and minorities, children in conflict with the law, working children, adopted children, refugees and asylum seekers. Responding to the Committee's recommendations to establish independent bodies for children, the Geneva Regional office continued to support the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children.

J. UNICEF Maurice Pate Leadership for Children Award

107. Mr. Kul Gautam, Deputy Executive Director, introduced the document proposing revisions in selection criteria and process for the Award (E/ICEF/2006/16). One delegation requested clarification on the circumstances under which the award would be conferred, given the change in the periodicity of the award from annual to occasional and also requested clarification on the change in the monetary value of the award. The Deputy Executive Director responded that the selection committee would accept nominations according to the current selection process, from which any number of awardees could be selected. The modification of the monetary value to a maximum of $50,000 in any one year was based

on both previous values of the award as well as experience demonstrating that the monetary aspect is not necessarily the greatest value for awardees.

108. See chapter III, decision 2006/12 for the decision adopted by the Executive Board.

K. Violence related to children and adolescents in conflict with the law: oral report

109. In her oral report, the Chief of the UNICEF Child Protection Section stressed that violence against children who are in conflict with the law is a worldwide problem that lacks visibility and public support. The UNICEF response focused on incorporating child justice principles in all work aimed at strengthening the justice sector and ensuring that prevention was an explicit part of social protection efforts. Collaboration with United Nations partners to leverage further results for children in this area was key and already well underway, for example with UNDP, the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

110. Delegations expressed strong support for the UNICEF approach to addressing violence against children in conflict with the law. Several speakers emphasized the need to mainstream children's concerns in legal reform and commended UNICEF and partners on the steps taken in this direction. There was agreement on the importance of advocacy to counter negative stereotypes and stigmatization of certain groups of children. Children should be seen as part of the solution rather than the problem and programmes should be based on the principle of engaging with those who are at risk.

111. Several delegations expressed appreciation for the emphasis on prevention, saying that programmes should focus on preventing at-risk children from coming into conflict with the law, from experiencing related violence and from committing violent crimes themselves. A speaker from Central America, expressing concern about her country's growing youth gangs, thanked UNICEF for its support in developing a policy on violence prevention as a way to counter juvenile crime. She outlined her Government's efforts to address gang violence through prevention programmes targeting at-risk youth and encouraged UNICEF to continue collaborating on this important issue. A speaker on behalf of African delegations underlined the need to strengthen social welfare sectors to ensure that social services are extended to the most vulnerable segments of society, especially children from families and communities marginalized by poverty.

L. United Nations Study on Violence against Children: oral report

112. The oral report was presented to brief the Executive Board on progress made on the United Nations Study on Violence against Children, which was being finalized and would be presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session. Professor Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, the Independent Expert leading the study, and Ms. Rima Salah, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, made brief presentations on Study-related activities in the last six months, including on an Inter-agency meeting held in New York on 2 March, and a children's meeting in May during which children prepared a child-friendly version of the report and its recommendations. A short video was shown in which children expressed their experiences with violence and made suggestions for preventing it.

113. A delegation, speaking on behalf of the African members of the Executive Board, said that family violence, including corporal punishment, and community violence such as FGM/C, child marriage and the abandonment of children accused of witchcraft, were the most prevalent forms of violence on the continent. The taboos surrounding many forms of violence had to be broken, and the causes and roots of violence had to be addressed. Other speakers said that support was needed for national strategies against violence against children, and children exposed to violence, such as child soldiers, children in gangs, victims of violence within their families and children who were perpetrators of violence needed treatment, recovery and opportunities for reintegration. The importance of national ownership of these measures also stressed. Other delegations asked about activities leading up to the launch and national launches. A delegation reported on actions undertaken by its Government, including a Child Rights Act, a National Plan of Action, and a Bill on Offences against children, as well as a national study on child abuse whose results would complement the global study.

114. UNICEF was commended for its lead role in the inter-agency cooperation on the issue. It was suggested that the study be presented to the Executive Board next year for discussion. A group of delegations said that given its crucial role in advocacy on protection issues, UNICEF had a special role in promoting implementation of the study's recommendations. It was suggested that the Secretary-General should appoint a Special Representative to ensure the follow-up and implementation of the study, with adequate resources.

115. Professor Pinheiro replied that many regions were preparing follow-up conferences to the regional consultations. Several countries had expressed interest in hosting national launches, including, for example, Egypt, Norway, Slovenia and Sweden. The recommendations would be circulated to Member States in the first week of August. He thanked the NGO Panel for its significant support and mentioned 32 publications by Save the Children for the Study. The Deputy Executive Director underlined that UNICEF would continue its work on these issues, as outlined in the MTSP for 2006-2009. She would also convene an inter-agency meeting in Geneva on 2 August. She stressed the importance of building a protective environment for children, saying that families in particular needed adequate support and access to social services.

M. Reports of Executive Board field visits

116. Introducing the report on his visit to the Central African Republic (E/ICEF/2006/CRP.8.), the President said that countries such as this one, especially in this subregion, were a testing ground of the international community's ability to effect critically important change in a situation of dire complexity and challenge. One could be perfectly logical in pointing out the missing links in the chain of joint efforts of the Government and the international development community, but this logic of patient waiting for positive developments to take root, although justified, effectively perpetuated the exposure of children and mothers to war, social strife, hunger and disease. But there could be a different kind of logic – the logic of affecting a tangible positive effect in a situation against all coolly calculated odds. There were grounds for such a scenario in the Central African Republic, he said, and he would not be making these passionate appeals if, in the eyes of women and little kids in Central African villages, he had not seen the strength of spirit and commitment to lasting change in their communities, as well as the political will for change of the national Government and local authorities. He would not be so passionate if he had not seen the ability of the UNICEF country team to make a real difference.

117. Following a short video on the President's trip, the representative of the Central African Republic said that the mission had helped the President to see with his own eyes the reality in the country. Although the Central African Republic was "extricating itself from the netherworld", women and children had suffered greatly. The Government was working to ensure that the country was on the right road, but much must be done and they would be successful only with the help of the international community. They had the political will but not the financial resources. The mission had been positively viewed by the Government, and he encouraged the President and the Board to take follow-up actions as necessary to support the country.

N. Address by the Chairperson of the UNICEF Global Staff Association (GSA)

118. The GSA Chairperson began by noting that the Executive Board delegations also represented the Governments that had set the global agenda in the Millennium Declaration and were members of the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly, and he hoped the points raised in his address would provide useful insights for related forums. He went on to summarize several issues raised by staff representatives at the annual meeting of the GSA. First, though staff members welcomed United Nations reform, they were concerned about its potential effects on the number of staff and on the identity of UNICEF. Staff voices should be heard in the reform process, including in the development of the next joint office model. Second, several recent incidents had underscored the need for heightened staff security and for bringing to justice those who perpetrate violence against staff. In addition, it was recommended that national and international staff have equal entitlements relating to security measures, such as reinforcement of homes and offices and opportunities for rest and recuperation. Third, the GSA was very supportive of, and involved in, the organizational review and considered the development of the staffing strategy under the strategic review of human resources to be of utmost importance. Finally, the GSA had decided to establish a global fund to contribute to emergency relief efforts.

O. Other matters

119. The Director, Office of Emergency Programmes, gave an update on emergency operations, including for the recent earthquake in Java, Indonesia, emphasizing that UNICEF and its partners were assigning a high priority to gender and child protection, to supporting the Humanitarian Coordinator and to improving the outreach of basic social services. Among several lessons learned, including through the implementation of the cluster approach, was the need for government-led emergency efforts and for rapid funding, the enhanced Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and the UNICEF EPF. He indicated that an update on the EPF would be provided at the 2006 second regular session.

120. Delegations requested additional information on the Java earthquake response, including the most urgent needs to be met and the funds involved in the appeal; on transition work in tsunami-affected countries, particularly in Indonesia and Sri Lanka; and on the CERF. The Director replied that for the Java earthquake crisis, UNICEF had been pledged $12 million of the $103 million sought through the June 2006 United Nations appeal, with $2.8 million received, and the greatest area of need was the provision of social services. Regarding the tsunami response, significant private sector funds had supported transition work, especially the rehabilitation of education, health, and water and sanitation services. The CERF, despite a few administrative difficulties, was working well for UNICEF.

P. Closing statements by the Executive Director and the President

121. The President thanked the facilitators who helped to ensure a productive outcome. He paid tribute to Ndolamb Ngokwey, Secretary of the Executive Board, who would soon assume his new post as United Nations Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Mozambique. Citing Mr. Ngokwey's "outstanding" work, the President expressed gratitude for the Secretary's "profound commitment to the cause of improving the well-being of children the world over", and presented Mr. Ngokwey with a symbolic gift on behalf of the Board.

122. The Executive Director praised the good work of the delegates, the President and the facilitators as well as the high level of participation of programme countries. She also acknowledged Mr. Ngokwey's "outstanding job" at UNICEF, citing his contribution to fostering dialogue and teamwork. She also thanked the outgoing Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, Thomas McDermott, for his many years of service. UNICEF staff, she said, was the "lifeblood of the organization". She also highlighted two partnerships, with FIFA in support of the "Unite for Children, Unite for Peace" campaign and with the United States National Basketball Association in support of the "Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS" campaign. Among other issues, she emphasized the commitment of UNICEF to achieving sustainable results for children, especially those related to the Millennium Development Goals; implementing the recommendations of the forthcoming United Nations Study on Violence against Children; promoting gender parity and equity; focusing on marginalized and excluded children; operationalizing the recommendations of the ongoing organizational review; and improving data collection.

123. Mr. Ngokwey thanked all present for their "support, guidance and trust" during his four-year tenure.

III. Decisions adopted by the Executive Board

2006/6. UNICEF post-crisis transition strategy in support of the medium-term strategic plan

The Executive Board

Endorses the UNICEF transition strategy as contained in document E/ICEF/2006/17 and Corr.1 as the support strategy for the medium-term strategic plan for its programmes in situations of transition from relief to development.

Annual session
9 June 2006

2006/7. Review of the UNICEF cost-recovery policy

The Executive Board:

1. *Welcomes* the report on the review of the UNICEF cost-recovery policy (E/ICEF/2006/AB/L.4) and acknowledges the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (E/ICEF/2006/AB/L.5);

2. *Stresses* that regular resources, *inter alia*, because of their untied nature, are the bedrock of the operational activities of UNICEF and, in this regard, notes with serious concerns the stagnation of regular resources available to UNICEF and encourages all donors to strive to increase contributions to regular resources;

3. *Recalls* the objectives set out in decision 2003/9 that other resources should support the medium strategic plan (MTSP) priorities and that regular resources should not subsidize the support costs for other resources programmes;

4. *Encourages* UNICEF to apply procedures that reduce transaction costs for other resources programmes and eliminate the subsidy of support costs for other programmes by regular resources;

5. *Recognizes* that the UNICEF recovery policy should be assessed within the broader framework of enhancing partnerships to help achieve the Millennium Development Goals for children;

6. *Concurs* with the basic objectives of simplification, harmonization and fiscal prudence guiding the recovery policy;

7. *Decides* that:

(a) A base recovery rate of 7 per cent be adopted for other resources income, with thematic contributions assessed at 5 per cent;

(b) The current rate of 5 per cent for non-thematic funding raised by the private sector in programme countries be maintained;

(c) A 1-per-cent reduction be assessed to joint programmes, where the Executive Director considers this is in the best interests of enhancing the collective efforts of United Nations agencies;

(d) A 1-per-cent reduction be assessed for contributions over $40 million, where the Executive Director is satisfied that economies of scale are met.

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8. *Requests* the Executive Director, in close cooperation with the UNDG members, to present a status report in 2007 on the progress towards harmonization on cost recovery, including information on cost-recovery methodologies;

9. *Requests* the Executive Director to keep the Board informed on a regular basis on the actual costs recovered, and on the impact of the applied rates on regular and other resources.

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2006/8. Report on UNICEF engagement in sector-wide approaches

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* UNICEF efforts and thorough analysis to systematize its contribution to sector-wide approaches;

2. *Recommends* that UNICEF provide regular updates on this issue as part of the results frameworks included in the Annual Report of the Executive Director.

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2006/9. The evaluation function in UNICEF

The Executive Board

1. *Welcomes* the report on the evaluation function (E/ICEF/2006/15) requested in its decision 2004/9;

2. *Notes* the definition of the Norms and Standards for evaluation by the United Nations system in 2005 through the United Nations Evaluation Group and the role of UNICEF in their development as well as its contribution to strengthening evaluation as a United Nations system function;

3. *Recalls* General Assembly resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, which stresses that national Governments have the primary responsibility for coordinating external assistance and evaluating its contribution to national priorities;

4. *Calls on* UNICEF to conduct evaluations of operations at the country level in close association with national Governments and to assist Governments in the development of national evaluation capacities;

5. *Requests* that UNICEF prepare a comprehensive evaluation policy for consideration by the Executive Board at its annual session in 2007;

6. *Requests* that UNICEF focus more on evaluating the results of the medium-term strategic plan and country programmes and also evaluate the results of its humanitarian response;

7. *Requests* that, as of the annual meeting of 2008, UNICEF submit a biennial report on the implementation of the evaluation policy, including evaluation expenditures and funding sources, at various levels of the organization.

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2006/10. Draft country programme documents

The Executive Board

Approves the aggregate indicative budgets for the following country programmes of cooperation:

Region/country	*Period*	*Regular resources*	*Other resources*	*Document E/ICEF/2006/*
Eastern and Southern Africa				
Ethiopia	2007-2011	119 750 000	350 000 000	P/L.2 and Corr.1
Malawi	2007	6 492 000	19 055 000	P/L.3
Mozambique	2007-2009	22 653 000	66 000 000	P/L.4
Rwanda	2007	4 949 000	8 000 000	P/L.5
West and Central Africa				
Equatorial Guinea	2007	736 000	390 000	P/L.7
Gabon	2007-2011	3 075 000	4 160 000	P/L.8
Guinea	2007-2011	17 060 000	27 200 000	P/L.9
Sao Tome and Principe	2007-2011	3 300 000	2 000 000	P/L.10
Togo	2007	2 269 000	2 529 000	P/L.11
East Asia and the Pacific				
Thailand	2007-2011	5 000 000	22 500 000	P/L.12
South Asia				
Bhutan	2007	966 000	2 000 000	P/L.13
Nepal	2007	5 250 000	13 700 000	P/L.14
Sri Lanka	2007	800 000	11 000 000	P/L.15
CEE and CIS				
Republic of Moldova	2007-2011	3 595 000	15 250 000	P/L.16
Middle East and North Africa				
Algeria	2007-2011	5 410 000	2 500 000	P/L.17
Egypt	2007-2011	13 195 000	31 805 000	P/L.18
Iraq	2007-2010	8 436 000	300 000 000	P/L.19
Lebanon	2007	616 000	1 200 000	P/L.20
Morocco	2007-2011	6 700 000	11 000 000	P/L.21
Oman	2007-2010	--	4 000 000	P/L.22
Sudan	2007	6 169 000	90 000 000	P/L.23
Syrian Arab Republic	2007-2011	4 605 000	1 450 000	P/L.24
Tunisia	2007-2011	3 320 000	3 000 000	P/L.25
Yemen	2007-2011	24 035 000	28 250 000	P/L.26

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2006/11. Recommendation for additional regular resources for approved country programmes

The Executive Board

Approves a total of $51,603,065 in regular resources to fund the approved country programmes of 38 countries (shown in tables 1 and 2 below) for 2006 and for 2007, whose regular resources planning levels, based on the modified allocation system and estimated global levels of programmable regular resources, are higher than the balance of approved funds for these countries:

Table 1.
Additional regular resources (RR) for 2006
(In United States dollars)

Region/country	Document E/ICEF	Approved programme duration	2006 RR Planning Level	2006 RR Balance	Additional 2006 RR to be approved
			(A)	(B)	(A-B)
Americas and the Caribbean					
Brazil	2001/P/L.20 and Add.1	2002-2006	924 000	840 000	84 000
Eastern and Southern Africa					
Ethiopia	2001/P/L.2 and Add.1	2002-2006	23 950 000	21 771 999	2 178 001
Malawi	2001/P/L.4 and Add.1	2002-2006	6 492 000	5 944 999	547 001
Rwanda	2000/P/L.1 and Add.1	2001-2006	4 949 000	4 499 000	450 000
Zambia	2001/P/L.9 and Add.1	2002-2006	5 012 000	4 686 000	326 000
Zimbabwe	2004/P/L.4 and Rev.1	2005-2006	2 223 000	2 021 000	202 000
Middle East and North Africa					
Iraq	2004/P/L.22 and Rev.1	2005-2006	2 109 000	2 014 000	95 000
Yemen	2001/P/L.49 and Add.1	2002-2006	4 807 000	4 651 000	156 000
East Asia and the Pacific					
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	2003/P/L.10	2004-2006	1 216 000	1 186 007	29 993
South Asia					
Nepal	2001/P/L.39 and Add.1	2002-2006	5 250 000	5 000 000	250 000
West and Central Africa					
Central African Republic	2001/P/L.10 and Add.1	2002-2006	2 313 000	2 155 999	157 001
Gambia	2001/P/L.13 and Add.1	2002-2006	974 000	970 999	3 001
Guinea	2001/P/L.14 and Add.1	2002-2006	3 400 000	3 201 000	199 000
Mali[1]	2002/P/L.6 and Add.1	2003-2007	7 377 000	7 073 242	303 758
Senegal	2001/P/L.17 and Add.1	2002-2006	3 165 000	3 008 999	156 001
Total					**5 136 756**

[1] Mali requires approval for additional RR for both 2006 and 2007 ($303,758 and $7,377,000 respectively) and is therefore included in both tables.

Table 2.
Additional regular resources (RR) for 2007
(In United States dollars)

Region/country	Document E/ICEF/	Approved programme duration	2007 RR Planning Level (A)	2007 RR Balance (B)	Additional 2007 RR to be approved (A-B)
Americas and the Caribbean					
Bolivia	2002/P/L.8 and Add.1	2003-2007	1 294 000	712 396	581 604
Chile[2]	2004/P/L.6 and Rev.1	2005-2009	400 000	100 392	299 608
Colombia	2001/P/L.21 and Add.1	2002-2007	892 000	800 544	91 456
Eastern Caribbean	2002/P/L.9 and Add.1	2003-2007	1 600 000	1 300 000	300 000
Venezuela	2001/P/L.34 and Add.1	2002-2007	600 000	24 982	575 018
Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States					
Tajikistan[3]	2004/P/L.17 and Rev.1	2005-2009	2 218 000	2 173 000	45 000
Eastern and Southern Africa					
Botswana	2002/P/L.1 and Add.1	2003-2007	630 000	600 051	29 949
Burundi	2004/P/L.2 and Rev.1	2005-2007	4 386 000	2 537 608	1 848 392
Comoros	2002/P/L.2 and Add.1	2003-2007	743 000	527 000	216 000
Lesotho	2001/P/L.3 and Add.1	2002-2007	1 034 000	773 199	260 801
Somalia[4]	2003/P/L.4	2004-2008	6 481 000	4 859 000	1 622 000
Middle East and North Africa					
Djibouti	2002/P/L.14 and Add.1	2003-2007	790 000	438 483	351 517
East Asia and the Pacific					
Pacific Islands	2002/P/L.10 and Add.1	2003-2007	3 000 000	762 404	2 237 596
Papua New Guinea	2002/P/L.11 and Add.1	2003-2007	1 430 000	537 668	892 332
Timor-Leste	2005/P/L.10	2006-2007	1 125 000	919 000	206 000
South Asia					
India	2002/P/L.12 and Add.1	2003-2007	32 579 000	31 133 366	1 445 634
Maldives	2002/P/L.13 and Add.1	2003-2007	734 000	435 113	298 887
West and Central Africa					
Benin[5]	2003/P/L.5	2004-2008	2 863 000	1 831 000	1 032 000
Côte d'Ivoire	2002/P/L.4 and Add.1	2003-2007	4 052 000	3 118 762	933 238
Dem. Rep. of the Congo	2005/P/L.33	2006-2007	24 122,000	19 736,000	4 386 000
Mali	2002/P/L.6 and Add.1	2003-2007	7 377 000	0	7 377 000
Niger	2003/P/L.7	2004-2007	9 343 000	311 255	9 031 745
Nigeria	2001/P/L.15 and Add.1	2002-2007	24 217 000	15 659 218	8 557 782
Sierra Leone	2003/P/L.8	2004-2007	4 245 000	398 250	3 846 750
Total					**46 466 309**
Grand total for 2006 and 2007 (Table 1 + Table 2)					**51 603 065**

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[2] Any additional allocation for Chile in 2008 will be included in next year's proposal to the Executive Board.
[3] Any additional allocation for Tajikistan in 2008 will be included in next year's proposal to the Executive Board.
[4] Any additional allocation for Somalia in 2008 will be included in next year's proposal to the Executive Board.
[5] Any additional allocation for Benin in 2008 will be included in next year's proposal to the Executive Board.

2006/12. UNICEF Maurice Pate Leadership for Children Award

The Executive Board,

Having considered the recommendation of the secretariat proposing changes to the UNICEF Maurice Pate Leadership for Children Award (E/ICEF/2006/16),

Decides that the procedure related to objectives, recipients, nominations, selection and value for the UNICEF Maurice Pate Award be amended to reflect the following:

1. Objectives and criteria

The Award will be titled "The UNICEF Maurice Pate Leadership for Children Award". The Award will be granted to an individual or organization displaying extraordinary example and exemplary innovation and inspirational leadership in contributing to the advancement of the UNICEF mandate for children on a national, regional and global scale. In selecting a recipient, consideration will be given to those individuals or organizations whose activities (a) provide for meaningful results for the betterment of children and young people's condition; and (b) encourage activities with a potential for multiplying positive effects for children in their community.

The Award not only will be conferred on the basis of recipients' previous work but will also be considered a grant in support of the continued work of the individual or organization in carrying out the above objectives.

2. Recipients

The Award may be conferred upon an institution, agency or individual, but not upon a Government or a Head of State or Government. The Award will not be conferred upon any United Nations organization or official. Caution will be exercised in the selection to ensure that a selected recipient does not inappropriately figure within the national political processes. Due regard will be given to the principle of equitable geographical balance.

3. Nominations

The Executive Director will invite nominations for the Award from United Nations Member States and Observers, specialized agencies, UNICEF Country Representatives, Regional Directors and other secretariat offices, and National Committees for UNICEF in order to ensure a broad range of nominations.

4. Selection Committee

The secretariat, in close consultation with the Bureau, will create a Selection Committee comprising up to seven independent, eminent persons who will be knowledgeable about the Award's criteria and who have demonstrated commitment to humanitarian principles.

5. Selection process

The Selection Committee, with the assistance of the secretariat, will receive nominations for the Award through the secretariat. After a comprehensive review and evaluation of the nominees, the Committee will submit to the Executive Board, through the Executive Director and after prior consultation with the Bureau, a single recommendation for approval by the Board.

6. Value

The Award will not necessarily be of monetary value. It may be bestowed as a symbolic appreciation of an individual's or organization's dedication to the cause of children. When of monetary value, the Award will confer no more than $50,000 in any one year, the amount to be met from regular resources.

7. **Award ceremony**

The Award will be bestowed at a public ceremony, thereby drawing further attention to the work of the recipient and to the mandate of UNICEF on behalf of children.

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